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CONSTRUCTIVE AND DISINTEGRATING FORCES IN THE SOCIAL AND NATIONAL LIFE OF EGYPT

*By Charles R. Watson, D.D., Secretary of the Board of Foreign
Missions of the United Presbyterian Church
of North America*

Napoleon is said to have remarked most emphatically to the Governor of St. Helena, "Egypt is the most important country in the world." It may belong to some future age and to some great world struggle to vindicate this judgment, but meanwhile there is no difficulty in establishing Egypt's claims to a place of unique interest in the thought of the civilized world. Situated along the highway of world travel, the depository of historic records and of monuments of supreme interest to the human race, the rendez-vous of those seeking pleasant winter diversions, a land of refuge for those wishing to escape from all rigorous weather, an example of almost baffling political entanglements, and most recently visited by a distinguished American and lifted into prominence by his repeated discussion of its conditions, Egypt enjoys, without any apparent abatement, the good or evil distinction of ever holding a conspicuous place on the world stage. To the student of history, Egypt affords an almost unique opportunity for comparing rival religious faiths or rival political powers as these have brought their influences to bear upon an integral section of the human race; for in this Valley of the Nile there have established themselves in successive periods the ancient Egyptian religions, then early Christianity, and finally Islam; while in much more rapid succession there came into this same area as conquerors or political rulers, the Greek, the Roman, the Persian, the Arab, the Turk, and, last and most important, the British. Because of these great religious and political changes through

which she has passed during the more than five millenniums of her history as a nation, Egypt is a land whose history lends itself with peculiar profit to study *in the large*, where broad surveys of entire periods, presenting distinct types of civilization, may be set over against each other bringing to light lessons of history which are altogether missed in the more detailed and specialized study of single periods of national life.

This tempting study, however, is not the object of our present consideration of Egypt. Modern, present-day conditions alone engage our attention. The social and national life of Egypt is the subject under discussion and we wish to examine into the forces affecting that life to discover their character and influence. We will begin with the national life of Egypt.

I. THE NATIONAL LIFE OF EGYPT

If you dig down into the soil almost anywhere in the Nile Valley and make careful observations, you can discover the traces of the Nile floods of past years. Here may be a heavy deposit of rich soil and yonder a thin stratum of sand; here a great washing away and yonder an unusual filling in. So with the national life of the country. The political experiences of past years are written, for better or for worse, into the present day national life. The subsoil is that Islamic political organism or system which owes its character to the Arab invasion and to a Moslem domination extending over more than twelve centuries. Then we find traces of Turkish rule, for here is an annual tribute of three and a half million dollars paid to Turkey and, what is vastly more serious, certain concessions called the Capitulations. Next stands the Khedivate, securing for Egypt practical independence from Turkey and securing to her national life a measure of unity and continuity under the leadership of a single family of rulers, with a consequent deliverance from all the vicissitudes of changing governors appointed every few years in a foreign capital. Further on we find traces of French influence, bespeaking those days when both Mohammed Ali and Ismail drew to their help French political counsellors and French

engineers. The former group introduced the new Egyptian nation into the political circles of Europe, enabling Ismail to say, "Mon pays n'est plus en Afrique; nous faisons partie de l'Europe actuellement." It may be an open question whether Egypt's entanglement in European politics has been fraught with blessing or with misfortune, or whether such entanglement was not inevitable anyhow, but so far-reaching have been the consequences of this policy which overthrew Oriental aloofness and brought Egypt into political contact with European powers, that it is well worth while to note the influences which were chiefly responsible for this phase of national development. And these influences were French. As for the French engineers, their scientific skill has witness borne to it even to this day in the continued use of many irrigation works which they put through and in the realization of many other plans which they had projected but could not carry out.

The next influence, traces of which are to be found in the national life of modern Egypt, is what might be called Internationalism. This goes back to the days of 1876 when Commissioners of the Public Debt of Egypt were appointed by the European Powers, and Egypt, so far as her financial interests were concerned, came under the guardianship of these European Powers, but more particularly of England and France.

Then we come to the supreme factor of the British occupation. The part which it has had and which it still plays in the national life of Egypt will be referred to later. Just now we only wish to get clearly before us the forces and factors which have affected and produced the national life of Egypt: Islamic influence, Turkish influence, the Capitulations, French influence, International influence, British influence! What an array of differing and even conflicting forces.

Alfred Milner has summarized the anomalous political situation which obtains in the Valley of the Nile, much after this fashion in his "England in Egypt": Egypt is a part of the Turkish Empire and subject to the Sultan; witness the three and a half million dollars of annual tribute sent to Constantinople! The Khedive is an independent sovereign and Egypt

is his kingdom; witness the firmans of the Sultan! Egypt is subject to the control of the Powers; witness their control of financial affairs and the treaty privileges which they claim, privileges such as no sovereign state would tolerate! Egypt is subject to Great Britain; witness these British troops and British heads of departments!

But not all the factors enumerated as having affected the national development of Egypt, are equally important to-day. Indeed some have almost ceased to attract attention. The Turkish government seems little concerned about Egypt save that the annual tribute be paid. The Khedive once restless and ambitious seems to have realized that after all it is not a bad thing to have Great Britain as his house-keeper, and has turned his attention to the development of his agricultural resources. French influence has distinctly waned and the French government has ceased from much of its querulousness about the British occupation of Egypt, since the compact relative to French influence in Morocco. Internationalism as related to the financial affairs of Egypt is no longer a serious factor, for Egypt is now paying off her debt and the Powers have no opportunity for interfering since their claims are being fully met.

Three factors remain, two of which have already been named and the third remains to be pointed out. The first is the continuance of the Capitulations, the second is the British Control, the third is Nationalism.

The Capitulations date back to the days when Moslem rule was supreme in the Levant. It was recognized that Mohammedan law secured no rights to non-Moslems either as regards the safety of life or the tenure of property. Such conditions naturally discouraged, if they did not wholly prevent, Western traders from settling in Moslem lands, to the great disadvantage of these Moslem lands. Accordingly, the Moslem rulers of Turkey ventured to offer to Western traders certain concessions, making them no longer amenable to the law of the land which was Moslem and which, as such, made no provision for the toleration of a Christian. These concessions were designated Capitulations. Egypt as a province of Turkey was a part of the area within which these concessions

were supposed to obtain. The Capitulations were granted in days of Moslem tyranny and oppression to safeguard to foreign residents certain limited rights. Now, in these days of Moslem political weakness, the Capitulations have become, by a strange irony of fate, the agency whereby foreigners may repudiate local authority and appeal to their own governments for judgment and trial. Should a Greek kill a fellow Greek or an Italian on the streets of Cairo, it is not the local authority which may arrest him and bring him to trial, but only his own government whose consular agent may be all too lax in the enforcement of Greek law, in the prosecution of the particular case, or in the final application of punishment. The injustice and iniquity of these Capitulations can scarcely be denounced too vigorously. The new conditions of security of government and the pledge for even-handed justice which British control gives, are adequate reasons for the relinquishment, under proper safeguards, of these Capitulation rights. In his last report, Sir Eldon Gorst says: "It has been frequently pointed out both by my predecessor and myself that the present system, under which no important law can be made applicable to Europeans resident in Egypt without the consent of fifteen different Powers, has reduced Egypt to a state of legislative impotence, and that the practical inconvenience resulting from this state of affairs is becoming greater every day, as the requirements of the country increase." Since the Capitulations affect the development of the national life of Egypt only as regards the foreign population, this brief consideration of the subject may suffice.

British influence now occupies our attention. Almost three decades have passed since Great Britain occupied Egypt. The work that has been accomplished, the transformations that have been wrought, by British administration, have been repeatedly portrayed and these portrayals have required whole volumes of even succinct narrations. The truth of Lord Rosebery's statement finds abundant support in the recent history of Egypt, that the British Empire is "the greatest secular agency for good known in the world."

To compare the Egypt of 1883 with the Egypt of to-day

is to reveal some startling contrasts, and these contrasts are to the glory of Great Britain. The national debt—the greatest peril of Egypt in 1883—has been reduced by over forty-four million dollars, and has become, considering the country's income, a negligible quantity. The interest charges which the country's revenue must meet annually are four and a half million dollars less than when British administration came into effect. The government revenue, on the other hand, has been advanced from \$45,000,000, in 1883, to \$77,000,000, in 1909. Imports have advanced from \$41,000,000 to over \$111,000,000; exports from \$49,000,000 to over \$130,000,000. The dreaded *Corvée*, or forced labor, has been abolished; so, too, the octroi duties in towns, bridge taxes against boats, fishermen's taxes, while both land tax and salt tax have been reduced.

The Department of Justice also has been reformed. The average case is put through the district court to-day in 71 days, as against 230 days required by the old régime.

Land—the gold dust of the Nile Valley—has advanced in value, so that Upper Egypt land that sold for \$80, or less, an acre sells now for \$300, or more; and Delta farming land that sold for \$350 an acre now is hard to get at \$700 an acre. Add to this the fact that the cultivable area of the country has increased 12 per cent. through irrigation works promoted by British administration.

The fellah, who used to get from one to two piastres per day, now gets three to five, the mason or carpenter gets ten to twenty piastres a day, instead of five to eight as formerly; meat which formerly sold for one and a half to two piastres a pound now brings three to three and a half piastres; butter-oil was formerly two and a half to three piastres a pound, while now it is five; the official rate of interest on borrowed money has dropped from 12 to 6 per cent. and while the fellah used to pay 50 per cent. to 60 per cent. on the money he would borrow, he need now pay only 9 per cent. to 12 per cent.

This is a day of material prosperity in the Nile Valley such as Egypt has not known, perhaps since the days of the early Ptolemies. Nor has Great Britain limited its uplift-

ing activities to material problems. Education has advanced, and both schools and the attendance upon them have gone forward by leaps and bounds. Figures are not available for a full comparison, but in government schools alone the attendance has doubled in fifteen years.

Not unmindful of the ultimate goal of national development, namely self-government, Great Britain has labored, though with scant appreciation of her efforts, to lay some foundations for the future self-direction of Egyptian national life. There have been established a Legislative Council, which is an advisory body, and a General Assembly, possessing a veto power in reference to taxation, both bodies being constituted with a view to a development of the idea of representative government. The measure of progress made in this direction may be suggested by the following extract from Sir Eldon Gorst's last report:

The weak points of the institution at present are that the majority of the members are easily led astray by the more turbulent spirits, and that the chief preoccupation of all of them is to avoid being abused in the native press for want of patriotism, which is the invariable result of any support, however mild or platonic, given to the proposals of the government. With time and patience it may be hoped that the members will free themselves from these faults, and will gradually become able to form an independent judgment on the matters brought before them, without being overawed by the loquaciousness of some of their colleagues, or led astray by Nationalist calumnies. The Government have gone as far as is possible in the direction of giving every facility to the Legislative Council to utilize the powers which they now possess, and no extension of functions is desirable until the proceedings of the Council show that such a course can be adopted without danger to the well-being of the community. In this respect I can only repeat what I said in last year's report, *viz.*, that the future development of the institution must depend upon the wisdom and discretion displayed by the members themselves.

It is important to observe that the establishment of these two institutions which look forward to self-government, was suggested by Lord Dufferin in 1883. It was not pressure from without which caused their establishment but a genuine readiness on the part of Great Britain to forward and, as soon as possible, to grant self-government to the Egyptian people.

Nationalism or the Nationalist Movement is the third factor in the development of the national life of Egypt. It is a movement which defies accurate description. A description which would portray the Nationalism of to-day would be untrue to the Nationalism of to-morrow. Its rallying cry is, "Egypt for the Egyptians." It has underlying it a principle which is legitimate and worthy. It can justify itself by all the arguments which justify democratic institutions and self-government. It can claim kinship to all patriotic movements. It is all this, *but* it is a movement which is yet in its crudest stage and it is well worth while to examine it carefully so that superficial generalizations may not lead to an inaccurate estimate of the present situation.

Nationalism is of comparatively recent origin. This will be found quite natural when we recall that only in most recent times have the Egyptians been sharers in any sense in the government of their country. There was little chance for a nationalistic movement in days of Turkish tyranny. Nationalism at that time could only invite the punishment which belongs to treason and rebellion.

The rebellion of Arabi Pasha in 1881 might, perhaps, be properly regarded as a Nationalist movement, for one of the chief complaints was favoritism shown Turkish officers to the disadvantage of Egyptian officers. If so, there is a suggestion of irony in the fact that this initial Nationalist movement was really the supreme cause of the British occupation of Egypt.

After the British occupation, Nationalism slumbered in Egypt, if indeed it existed at all, until there came to Egypt as to the entire Orient an awakening of the national consciousness, induced by the signal defeat of Russia at the hands of Japan. Education and an increasing acquaintance with Western institutions and governments have undoubtedly contributed to the development of this nationalistic spirit. Recent events in Turkey have naturally suggested to the Egyptian the possibility of similar developments in his own national life. Thus we arrive at the present-day situation.

There is to be found then in Egypt to-day a considerable constituency committed to the somewhat hazy program of

the Nationalist party. The goal of all agitation is the withdrawal of the British and the entire committal of the government to Egyptians. It is confidently asserted that the time is ripe for this great evolution of Egyptian self-government. It is not explained with any great clearness or consistency just who shall constitute the governing body, nor with what safeguards this new government shall be established. The only point at which the Nationalist movement has the opportunity, to-day, of coming into direct touch with the existing system of government is in the Legislative Council and the General Assembly. The use that has been made of this opportunity was shown by the quotation already made from Sir Eldon Gorst's Report. Of course, the Nationalist movement also has access to the wide field of journalism, and its agitations here have borne fruit, perhaps in a measure to public enlightenment, but for the most part only to the inflaming of passions and the development of a partizan spirit.

It is difficult to pass judgment upon a movement which is still in an elementary stage of development, but the following observations may be made without serious risk of their contradiction:

1. The ultimate goal, self-government for Egypt, is not really a matter of dispute. Great Britain is willing to concede its desirability. The real question is whether the time is at hand, or even nigh, for the realization of this desirable issue. The Nationalist thinks he and his country are quite ready for it. Those who know the qualities upon which successful self-government rests are inclined to doubt the ripeness of Egypt for self-government.

2. The backward condition of the Egyptian nation educationally does not justify the ardent hopes of the Nationalist. A nation 94 per cent of whose population is illiterate can scarcely be regarded as ripe for self-government.

3. The supreme need of the non-Christian world, is, however, not mere education, but moral character, such character as carries with it independence of thought and judgment, poise, integrity, even-handed justice, the ability to set aside selfish considerations and view sympathetically the needs of others. And upon such character rests successful self-

government. In common with the entire Orient, Egypt has made more rapid progress in education than in the development of moral character. The moral efficiency of native Egyptian government officials affords abundant cause for congratulation on progress already made, but does not afford any ground for believing that the Egyptian could as yet stand the moral strain of leadership and self-government.

4. The Nationalist movement is too deeply affiliated with an Islamic propaganda to inspire confidence. The cry, "Egypt for the Egyptians" has too often been interpreted in action, "Egypt for the Moslems." The assassination of a Christian Prime Minister and the subsequent justification of the murder by the Nationalist papers does not commend the movement to those in the West who sympathize with every legitimate national movement. It is interesting in this connection to note that the Mufti, the highest exponent of Moslem law, in refusing to sanction the execution of the murderer gave three reasons for this refusal. The first was that as Mohammed had not foreseen and provided against the case of murder by a revolver, no death sentence could legally be inflicted upon any Moslem who took life with that weapon. The second was that the murder of a non-Moslem by a Moslem is not a murder in the eyes of the law and is not therefore punishable by death. The third reason was that as the relatives of the murdered man had not brought in the charge, the murderer should not be executed.

This is not the place to explain in detail how the affiliation of the Nationalist movement with Islamism must seriously discredit Nationalism. It may suffice to point out that one in ten of Egypt's population is Christian and no Christian would be willing to come under a government which affiliates itself with those who hold in respect to Christians' rights such views as those promulgated by the Mufti in his decision. And, altogether apart from any consideration of the interests and safety of either native Christians or of foreigners, and considering solely the probable success of a national movement and its capacity for progress, wedded to Islam, it will be well to remember the judgment which Lord Cromer expressed after a lifelong practical experience with Islam:

“In dealing with the question of introducing European civilization into Egypt, it should never be forgotten that Islam cannot be reformed; that is to say, reformed Islam is Islam no longer; it is something else.”

5. The National movement in its insistence upon the privileges of self-government, fails to take adequate cognizance of the perils and responsibilities of complete national independence. There is material prosperity in Egypt to-day, there are international credits and foreign investments, there is freedom from foreign interference in hundreds of international relations, all because Great Britain, the mistress of the seas, is Egypt's guardian. It is not possible to believe that so small and so weak, so inexperienced and so perilously situated a nation as Egypt, could launch out safely upon a life of political independence. Even British prestige and diplomacy have not yet succeeded in freeing Egypt from the odious Capitulations. How much less able to secure freedom and to maintain freedom would an independent Egyptian State be at the present time!

If we come then to the conclusion that Egypt is not yet ready for self-government, certain broad and general principles of a constructive character should be laid down with reference to the future.

1. The Nationalist movement need not go out of business. It has a legitimate mission in the development of the national life of Egypt. It may and should seek to keep alive and develop the national consciousness of the Egyptian people. Patriotism is a quality sadly lacking in the average Egyptian. Individual unselfishness for the sake of the nation lies at the foundation of Japanese national development; but this is a rare virtue in the Valley of the Nile.

The Nationalist movement should seek to improve, not abuse or despise, the limited opportunity now given to the Egyptian to serve his country and the existing government. He that is not faithful in little cannot be judged worthy of more. The Legislative Council, even with its limited powers, affords a concrete opportunity for proving Egyptian capacity for self-government. The criticisms passed upon this body indicate that it remains as yet an unimproved opportunity.

The Nationalist movement should direct its attention to the elevation of the masses. Self-government is a pyramid which requires a broad base of knowledge and of education, and not merely little or much enlightenment at the top.

2. The British government has before it a double and a difficult task; we may add also a thankless task. It is, on the one hand, that of steadily refusing to accede to the clamor of an over eager Nationalist movement for greater powers of self-government when the nation has not yet qualified for these responsibilities; and, on the other hand, that of using every means for developing the nation for the self-government upon which it is ultimately to enter. It was to the first feature of this task that Mr. Roosevelt referred in his Guild Hall address.

It would be difficult to refer to the task of the British administrator without turning aside to testify to the devoted, the unselfish, the heroic way in which so many British agents have labored for the accomplishment of the task. If any would understand more fully what is here referred to, let them read the Reports on Egypt presented annually by the British Agent and Consul-General to the British Parliament, and mark the herculean undertakings carried through by British administrators without complaint or criticism, but rather with recurring cautions to their British subordinates to avoid every possible friction between British and Egyptian agents. Let them read Lord Cromer's "Modern Egypt" and note the spirit which permeates the book, but which shines out most clearly in the following closing paragraph:

The want of gratitude displayed by a nation to its alien benefactors is almost as old as history itself. In whatever degree ingratitude may exist, it would be unjust to blame the Egyptians for following the dictates of human nature. In any case, whatever be the moral harvest we may reap, we must continue to do our duty and our duty has been indicated to us by the Apostle St. Paul. We must not be "weary in well doing."

At one point only is a reversal of British policy required. We were referring a moment ago to the Nationalist's interpretation of the rallying cry "Egypt for the Egyptians"

so that it is made to mean "Egypt for the Moslems," and we were criticising this injection of religious discrimination in the application of nationalistic principles. There is reason for believing that one feature of the British policy in Egypt has encouraged the Nationalist in this evil course.

Few if any would deny that the British policy in Egypt has been pro-Moslem. Thus we find Egyptian Christians arbitrarily excluded from several departments of government service, although qualifying for them. Native commissioned officers are exclusively Moslem. It is said that even in the days of Ismail more Christians were permitted advancement to the position of *omdeh* of towns and villages than to-day. In spite of superior work in government examinations, native Christians must give precedence to Moslem candidates. Aside from the question of simple justice, this course seems condemned by the argument of policy. This partiality to Islam has developed in Moslem ranks a spirit of pride which leads the Moslem to believe that his religion makes him essentially superior to a Christian and gives him prior rights at every turn in life. If Great Britain would develop a true Nationalism free from religious discrimination, she must herself follow a policy which will place no disqualifications upon non-Moslems but judge Moslem and non-Moslem impartially according to ability and faithfulness.

3. There is a distinct field for missionary and philanthropic service in the development of a true national life in Egypt. And here the opportunity seems to be peculiarly American, for the missionary forces which labor for the uplift of Egypt are predominantly American. Fifty years of continuous effort have availed for the establishment in the Nile Valley of a vast network of Christian schools, primary, secondary and collegiate,—at Assiut is a college with an enrolment of 768 students. And in these schools are gathered 17,530 pupils (almost 4000 of whom are Moslems), no inconsiderable number, indeed more than one-tenth of the entire educational enrolment of the country which is reported upon by the government's department of education. This department covers in its survey all public and private schools which follow Western educational methods. It would lead us too

far afield to present the testimony of many government officials to the service rendered to the nation and the government by the training given in these schools.

If a true and permanent national development is only possible upon the basis of individual character and especially that sort of character which is the best product of Christian teaching and Christian civilization, then a rare opportunity is offered for forwarding the national development of Egypt by the promotion of Christian schools in which moral training may have a place alongside of intellectual development. It is to be noted that government schools in Egypt, owing to Islamic influences, can impart none of that moral training which public and private, denominational and state institutions alike in our own country recognize as an essential part of all true education. There is at present urgent need, therefore, not only for the establishment of many more schools of a secondary grade, but also for the establishment, at a great center like Cairo, of a Christian university where the highest education which the country may demand may be offered to the rising Egyptian generation in conjunction with the moral teachings and training of Christianity.

In view of the large numbers going to Europe, especially to Germany and England, for an education, a special opportunity is also afforded those coming into touch with these future leaders of Egyptian national life, to bring to bear upon them individually influences which will broaden and uplift.

Should these three forces be brought to bear unitedly upon the national life of Egypt—the uplifting influence of a true and worthy Nationalism, the steady and firm, yet kindly and sympathetic administration of Egyptian affairs by Great Britain, and the transformation of individual life and the development of strong leaders by missionary and other philanthropic agencies—who can tell how soon Egypt may be worthy and able to take her place among the nations, herself also an independent, self-governing nation?

II. THE SOCIAL LIFE OF EGYPT

The term "social life" is frequently used in a broad sense involving the consideration of language, art, music and education generally, social strata, customs of home and public life, filial piety, marriage laws and family life generally. To consider the present day social life of Egypt after this broad fashion would be to write a book. We limit ourselves to the central and essential fact of all social life, namely the position and treatment of woman. In treating of Egypt's social life even in this limited way, we are not breaking with the theme treated in the first part of this paper, namely, the national life of the country; rather are we dealing with a subject vitally related to that theme. The connection between the national life of Egypt and her social life is most admirably set forth in the two following statements of Lord Cromer:

Looking solely to the possibility of reforming these countries which have adopted the faith of Islam, it may be asked whether anyone can conceive the existence of true European civilization on the assumption that the position which women occupy in Europe is abstracted from the general plan? As well can a man blind from his birth be made to conceive the existence of colour. Change the position of women, and one of the main pillars, not only of European civilization, but at all events of the moral code based on the Christian religion, if not of Christianity itself, falls to the ground. The position of women in Egypt, and in Mohammedan countries generally, is, therefore, a fatal obstacle to the attainment of that elevation of thought and character which should accompany the introduction of European civilization, if that civilization is to produce its full measure of beneficial effect.

Again he says:

The European reformer may instruct, he may explain, he may argue, he may devise the most ingenious methods for the moral and material development of the people, he may use his best endeavors to 'cut blocks with a razor' and to graft true civilization on a society which is but just emerging from barbarism, but unless he proves himself able, not only to educate, but to elevate the Egyptian woman, he will never succeed in affording to the Egyptian man, in any thorough degree, the only European education which is worthy of Europe.

Our inquiry into the position of woman in the social life of Egypt is therefore vital to the last degree. This inquiry cannot proceed far without a recognition of the fact that we have to deal with a clearly defined social system, which is neither an accident nor the result of some processes of natural social development. Egypt's social system is the deliberate creation of rigid unbending unchanging Islamic law. The effort is made periodically, but uniformly without success, to show that what we call Moslem social life is not an integral part of the Mohammedan religion. But Islam is not only a religion; it is a political system and it is also a social life. Changes effected in the political or social worlds of a Moslem people are invariably effected at the expense of loyalty to the religion of Islam. This fact is stated here not for any mere purpose of criticizing Islam but that we may appreciate the seriousness and difficulty of undertaking to influence the social life of a Mohammedan land like Egypt.

Considering now the great mass of Egypt's social life, five serious evils are discovered:

1. The first is the seclusion of woman. It is a law of the Moslem social world that the higher the rank in society the more secluded will be the women. The narrowing influence of this social rule can scarcely be overestimated. Add to this, the fact that the seclusion of woman had its initial necessity and suggestion in the immoralities of men and the untrustworthiness of women, and we can more readily understand how degrading in its suggestiveness and its associations is this custom.

2. The second evil is that of the ignorance of woman. It is almost incredible that the census returns for literacy in such a land as Egypt should show only three in a thousand able to read and write.

3. The third evil is an almost entire lack of social fellowship between man and woman. Such social intercourse would naturally be greatly limited, under any circumstances, by the laws secluding woman. But even where close kinship or relationship would permit such fellowship, it is very rarely found. One of the most potent factors in the strengthening or the refinement of character is wholly lost.

4. The fourth evil is the allowance of polygamy. We speak of its allowance, for in many communities where poverty forbids or where Western ideals restrain, there is not the practice of polygamy. Nevertheless the fact that polygamy is legal and that Moslem law distinctly allows four legal wives, robs the wife of a sense of security and the husband of the uplifting influence of an undivided affection.

5. The fifth evil is the most pathetic as it is also the most baneful. It is that of divorce. If our nation is gaining an unenviable distinction by the laxity of her marriage laws and the frequency of divorce, yet to suggest a comparison between the social conditions of Egypt and America would be to attempt to liken what is a mere accident to something which is an essential of life. Men in middle life who have been married ten or fifteen times are only fair representatives of the social life of Egypt, while a leading Moslem has ventured the estimate that at least 95 per cent of all Egyptian wives are divorced by their husbands.

Now turning aside from this listing of defects in the social life of Egypt, the question suggests itself whether there are any constructive forces offsetting these disintegrating social influences. Two present themselves: the impact of Western civilization and the influence of education.

There is too much foreign life in Egypt to permit Egyptian social life to remain ignorant of the differing and higher standards of Western social life. The social freedom enjoyed by Syrian and other Asiatic residents has helped to bridge the gulf between conservative Egypt and the liberal West. The adoption of Western social customs by an ever enlarging group of Egyptian officials is removing much of the obloquy which belonged to any departure from strict Moslem ways. If the impact of Western, especially European life upon Egyptian social life is rendering this liberalizing service, yet it must be noted that all too frequently this contact with the West leads to the adoption of the superficial features or even of the excrescences and defects of Western social life, so that this influence is, to a degree, anything but constructive. Intemperance, for example, is on the increase to a lamentable degree in circles where Egyptian life is brought into contact with European life. It is also an open question

whether the Egyptian is really more moral when, laying aside Moslem polygamy, he apes Western life and announces that he will have but one wife. The immoralities which he regards as a part of the European social life may be more blighting to him than the legalized laxities of the Moslem social system.

A more reliable constructive influence is that of education, especially female education. It will not be hard to realize that such education is still in its most elementary stages when Sir Eldon Gorst's Report is read and there are found in the government primary schools only some 445 girls, while even in the kuttabs or vernacular schools there are reported less than 17,000 girls. These figures show a proportion of about one girl to every ten boys in attendance on schools.

The advantage of schools under Western and especially Christian auspices over those under government and therefore Islamic influences, was referred to a moment ago. This advantage is due to the fact that the Christian institution definitely aims to develop character as well as to impart knowledge. This advantage calls for special emphasis where female education is being considered, and the advantage has been so far recognized that Moslem government officials have been known to take their daughters away from the government schools and place them in the Christian school. It was an institution of this sort—a Christian College for Girls—that Mr. Roosevelt dedicated on the same day on which he delivered that much discussed address before the Egyptian University at Cairo.

The regeneration of Egyptian social life must necessarily be a much slower process than the development of Egyptian national life. It is easy to overturn a government; it is more difficult to transform society. Yet the two are closely related and certainly Egyptian national and political life can never become what it ought to be until it can rest for security and strength upon a transformed social life. The attainment of this worthy object calls for devoted and unselfish labor on the part of statesman, educationist and missionary alike. Their methods may differ but the help and coöperation of all three are needed to usher in the New Egypt which is yet to be.